



USDA FOREST SERVICE
Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry
Morgantown Field Office
Forest Health

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2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project
on the
Monongahela National Forest using
Bacillus thuringiensis var. *kurstaki***

Prepared by

Amy Onken, Entomologist

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EVALUATION OF THE 2001 GYPSY MOTH SUPPRESSION PROJECT ON THE MONGAHELA NATIONAL FOREST

Introduction

During the summer of 2000, approximately 42,420 acres within the proclamation boundary of the Monongahela National Forest (MNF) were defoliated by gypsy moths. Of this acreage, 12,246 acres of National Forest land were heavily defoliated, 8,363 acres were moderately defoliated, and an additional 21,907 acres of other ownership lands within the proclamation boundary were also defoliated.

In May 2001, the MNF aerially treated 14,381 acres with *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* (Btk) in order to prevent additional unacceptable damage to forest resources from concentrated high-density gypsy moth populations within areas where defoliation had occurred in 2000. The objectives of the 2001 MNF gypsy moth suppression project were:

1. Recreational Areas – to minimize spread of gypsy moths and to reduce aesthetic impacts of defoliation, and discomfort associated with the gypsy moth itself.
2. General Forest Areas – to reduce large scale declines in forest health, which could lead to large areas of increased tree mortality.

The project was considered successful within the recreation area if no defoliation was noticeable to the average forest visitor (<30%) and the number of egg masses was less than 250 per acre in 2001. In general forest areas, the project was considered successful if second time defoliation was limited to 40% or less and the number of egg masses were less than 750 per acre in 2001.

The objectives were measured through aerial defoliation surveys in June and post treatment egg mass surveys conducted in the fall of 2001.

Also, in conjunction with the 2001 gypsy moth suppression project, the MNF conducted a field evaluation of Thuricide 76LV, a new formulation of the biological insecticide *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* in conjunction with the operational suppression project. Thuricide 76LV is not on the list of approved insecticides by the US Forest Service for Federally funded gypsy moth suppression projects. The purpose of the field evaluation was to evaluate the effectiveness of the product against untreated control areas. Treatment success was measured through aerial defoliation surveys and post treatment egg mass surveys of the treated and untreated blocks.

Methods

Treatment Block Selection

The treatment areas for the 2001 project were based on gypsy moth population densities, the projected damage, land use category, and slowing the spread of gypsy moth into un-infested areas.

Pre and Post Treatment Surveys

Pre and post treatment egg mass surveys were conducted in each treatment and control block using the 1/40-acre fixed-radius plot method. Defoliation was delineated by aerial surveys during peak defoliation, which is usually the month of June following spraying. The defoliation was categorized as none, light (1-30 percent of the foliage missing), moderate (31-60 percent of the foliage missing), and heavy (>61 percent of the foliage missing).

Treatment Specifications

The MNF treated 7 blocks totaling 14,381 acres using Foray 76B or Thuricide 76 LV. All blocks were treated with either a single (565 acres) or double application (13,816 acres) at 24 BIU/ac at the application volume of 43 ounces per acre (Table 1).

Table 1. 2001 Gypsy Moth Treatment Blocks

Block Name	# Acres	Treatment Threshold (EM/AC)	Pre-Trt (EM/AC)	Insecticide	No. Applications
Lee Bell North	236	750	1,281	Thuricide 76LV	1
Lee Bell South	329	750	1,980	Thuricide 76LV	1
Thorny Creek	792	750	4,070	Thuricide 76LV	2
Grindstone	92	750	3,850	Foray 76B	2
Brushy Mtn.	2,888	750	4,582	Foray 76B	2
Lake Sherwood	2,204	250	3,044	Foray 76B	2
Lockridge	7,840	750	6,759	Foray 76B	2
TOTAL	14,381				

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) contracted with Maurice's Flying Service for gypsy moth suppression on state and private lands. The treatments of all MNF blocks were included in the WVDA contract. A turbo Air Tractor 502 was contracted to do the treatments and was equipped with a SATLOC DGPS system, which was used for the duration of the project. The Air Tractor was equipped with 6 Micronair AU5000 rotary atomizers and was calibrated to deliver 43 ounces per acre with an effective swath width of 150 feet.

Treatment application guidelines and spray operation controls are two important aspects of a successful suppression project. In order to assure that treatment application guidelines are met, the following biological and environmental parameters should be followed:

Insect Development

1. 1st Application – Spray when 80% of the larvae are in 1st and 20% are in 2nd instar.
2. 2nd Application – Spray within 5 to 7 days of the 1st application. Spray when no more than 25% of the larvae are in 3rd instar.

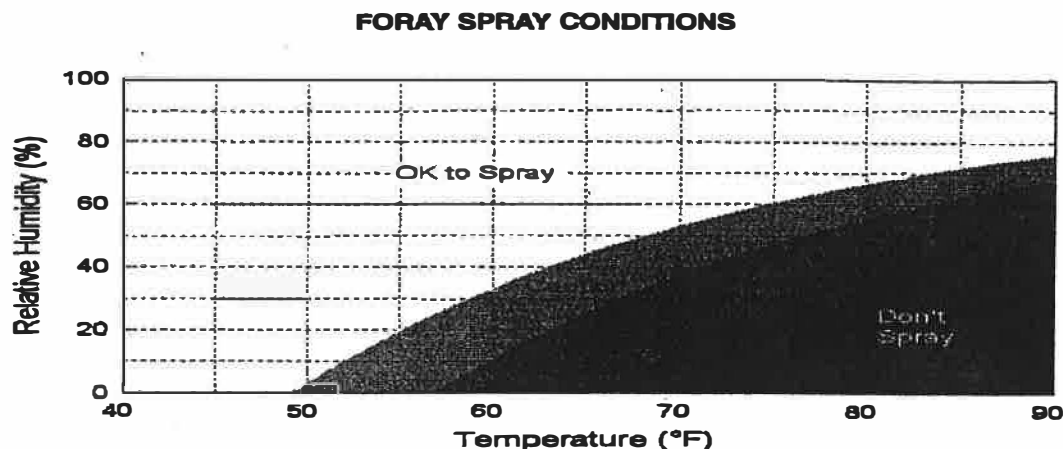
Foliage Development

Btk should be applied when sufficient foliage exists to provide an adequate target for the insecticide. Generally, this criterion is met when 30 percent or more of the foliage has expanded.

Weather

1. Spray when wind speed at tree canopy height is 1-10 mph and steady.
2. Avoid inversions.
3. Avoid thermal updrafts
4. Spray when foliage is dry. Rainfall in excess of 0.1 inch within three hours after treatment may necessitate re-treatment.
5. Spray when <50% chance of precipitation is predicted within four hours.
6. Temperature and humidity should be constantly monitored (refer to figure 1. below).
*The graph below was used for both products with the assumption that the amount of available water for both products is similar.

Figure 1. Temperature/Relative Humidity relationship showing safe and unsafe meteorological conditions for spraying undiluted and diluted aqueous formulations of Foray formulations.



Spray operation controls that were followed included the use of DGPS to assure that the treatment areas were covered. DGPS flight files were downloaded and reviewed at the conclusion of each spray session. In addition, the aerial and ground observers radioed observations on weather conditions, spray penetration, and equipment function. Operational decisions were based on these reports, as well as on weather measurements obtained from the airport.

Results

Forest Defoliation

Overall, based on the MNF's objective of preventing >30% defoliation on recreational areas and ≥40% on general forested areas, 97% (13,936 acres) of the acreage was treated successfully (Table 2).

Table 2. Defoliation results from the 2001 MNF suppression project

Block Name	# Acres	Pre-Trt (EM/Ac)	Insecticide	No. Applic.	Def. (Mod) (# Acres)	Def. (Heavy) (# Acres)	% Success fully Treated
Lee Bell North	236	1,281	Thuricide 76LV	1		59	75%
Lee Bell South	329	1,980	Thuricide 76LV	1		70	79%
Thorny Creek	792	4,070	Thuricide 76LV	2		53	93%
Grindstone	92	3,850	Foray 76B	2			100%
Brushy Mtn.	2,888	4,582	Foray 76B	2	168		94%
Lake Sherwood	2,204	3,044	Foray 76B	2	48	47	96%
Lockridge	7,840	6,759	Foray 76B	2			100%
TOTAL	14,381				216	229	97%
Control 1	80	4,593				80	
Control 2	60	4,714				59	
Control 3	62	2,621				62	
TOTAL	202					201	

Results from the Thuricide 48LV blocks are favorable with 87% of the acreage successfully treated. Approximately 182 acres were heavily defoliated with both a single or double application. Results from the double application are more favorable with 93% of the acreage treated successfully. All three control blocks received heavy defoliation on 99% of the acreage.

Results from the Foray 76B blocks show that 98% (12,761 acres) of the acreage was successfully treated. Approximately 263 acres were moderate to heavily defoliated with a double application.

Population Reduction

Overall, based on the MNF's objective of population reduction below pre-treatment thresholds, 61% of the acreage (8,724 acres) was treated successfully (Table 3).

Table 3. Population reduction results from the 2001 MNF suppression project

Block Name	# Acres	Pre-Trt (EM/AC)	Post-Trt	Treatment Threshold (EM/AC)	Insecticide	No. Applic.
Lee Bell North	236	1,281	1,304	750	Thuricide 76LV	1
Lee Bell South	329	1,980	1,031	750	Thuricide 76LV	1
Thorny Creek	792	4,070	89	750	Thuricide 76LV	2
Grindstone	92	3,850	660	750	Foray 76B	2
Brushy Mtn.	2,888	4,582	899	750	Foray 76B	2
Lake Sherwood	2,204	3,044	341	250	Foray 76B	2
Lockridge	7,840	6,759	221	750	Foray 76B	2
TOTAL	14,381					
Control 1	80	4,593	1,380			
Control 2	60	4,714	2,864			
Control 3	62	2,621	1,140			
TOTAL	197					

Results from the single application Thuricide 48LV blocks are not favorable, with 58% of the acreage successfully treated based on population reduction. The Thorny Creek block was successful in population reduction, having post treatment population densities below the pre-treatment threshold. Thorny Creek is the only block that received a double application of Thuricide 48LV.

Results from the Foray 76B blocks are not favorable, with a 61% success rate. Both the Brushy Mountain and Lake Sherwood blocks do not have post treatment population densities below the pre-treatment threshold.

Discussion

Field crews collected gypsy moth cadavers from the treatment and control blocks while conducting fall egg mass surveys. The cadavers were microscopically examined for the presence of the gypsy moth fungus, *Entomophaga maimaiga*, or virus. All cadavers collected tested positive for the presence of fungus. The presence of fungus may have contributed to population decline by killing the 4-6th instars that were present after the treatments.

Field Evaluation of Thuricide 76LV

Lee Bell North and South blocks failed based on population reduction and had marginal foliage protection (see Appendix A). Both blocks were treated with one application of Thuricide 76LV on the same day, time, and load. Environmental conditions at the time of treatment were not within treatment application guidelines (see Appendix B), with low humidity and high winds. The last load was applied with wind speeds of 13-18 mph recorded by field personnel in the block at the time of treatment. Field crews did report spray deposit was recovered in the treatment block at the time of treatment.

The Thorny Creek Block received a double application of Thuricide 76LV and was successfully treated based on foliage protection and population reduction.

Control blocks 1, 2, and 3 were 97% defoliated (see Appendix A) but based on egg mass surveys conducted in the fall of 2001, populations were reduced by 70, 39, and 57 percent, respectively. However, the egg mass densities are still well above the 750 egg masses per acre treatment threshold. Population reduction may be attributed to natural causes such as the gypsy moth fungus, which was collected in the control blocks and throughout the generally infested areas on the MNF.

Foray 76B

The Grindstone block received a double application of Foray 76B and was treated successfully based on foliage protection and population reduction. Both applications were made during good environmental conditions and the larval and foliage development were within treatment parameters (see Appendix B).

Brushy Mountain received a double application of Foray 76B and was successfully treated based on foliage protection but failed based on population reduction. For the first application, the block was treated in 3 days and 2 days for the second application. The second application should have been within 5-7 days of the first application, but was treated 9-10 days. The timing of spray based on larval and foliage development was late. The first application was made when a majority of the larvae were in 2nd instar. With 9-10 days between treatments due to inclement weather, the foliage expansion had escalated to 80% with 3rd instar larvae present in the treatment block during the second application (Appendix B). According to the GPS flight files (Appendix C); a strip on the eastern portion of the block did not receive coverage from the first application. Two post treatment egg mass survey points in this location had 2,320 and 3,080 egg masses per acre. Failure in this portion of the block may be attributed to the skip in deposit from the first application.

The Lake Sherwood block received a double application of Foray 76B and was successfully treated based on foliage protection with only 4% of the block receiving moderate to heavy defoliation (Appendix A). A majority of the defoliation was mapped on the northeast edge of the treatment block. This could be due to the migration of larvae from the untreated heavily defoliated area into the treated area. Based on population reduction, the block was not successfully treated even though population reduction was 89%. The post treatment egg mass density is 341 egg masses per acre and the treatment threshold is 250 egg masses per acre. It should be noted that 6 surveys points that fell on the eastern border of the treatment block averaged 880 egg masses per acre; with the remainder of the survey points through out the block averaging 168 egg masses per acre with 56% of the survey points having zero egg masses per acre. Even though the average post treatment egg mass density is above the pre-treatment threshold, overall the block will not require treatment in 2002. The treatments were made within the application guidelines with the exception of the first load on the second application (Appendix B). This load was sprayed when the humidity was questionable based on figure 1. It should be noted that the block did receive good coverage on the second application, even though the GPS flight files show no coverage (Appendix C). The applicator reported problems with the SATLOC

system showing the flight lines for this portion of the block, and both ground and aerial observers indicated spray deposit was occurring.

The Lockridge Block received a double application of Foray 76B and was successfully treated based on foliage protection and population reduction.

Conclusion

The MNF had a treatment success rate of 97% based on foliage protection and 61% based on population reduction. Based on the results, a single application of Thuricide 48LV at 43 ounces per acre should not be recommended for future projects. Since single applications of Foray 76B were not tested, the failure of the two single application blocks can not be justified based on product deficiency or the low volume (43 ounces per acre). Prior to 2001, single applications of *Btk* at 43 ounces per acre have never been used operationally on Federal or State cooperative suppression projects.

Recommendations

1. Additional field evaluations for single and double applications of both Thuricide 76LV and Foray 76B at an application rate of 43 ounces per acre need to be conducted.
2. Attention should be made to the target droplet size of *Btk* (80 - 100 microns) when using low volumes (43 ounces/acre). Blade angles of Micronairs should be adjusted to ensure the target droplet size is met. Blade angles of the Micronairs were not recorded, so the desired droplet size cannot be verified.
3. The MNF should submit their own contract for the suppression project unless the project area is small and is not economically feasible (i.e. < 5,000 acres and can be included in the WVDA contract). Due to inclement weather that delayed the WVDA suppression project, only one aircraft could be released to work on the MNF project.
4. Additional aircraft should have been used on the project. Production rates (# Acres/hour) should be incorporated into the spray contract. For example:

Application time period = 10 days* (biological window) x 3 hours/day (conservative)

Acreage = 28,197 acres

10 days x 3 hours = 900 acres/hour or 300 gallons/hour (for 1/3 gal/ac treatments)

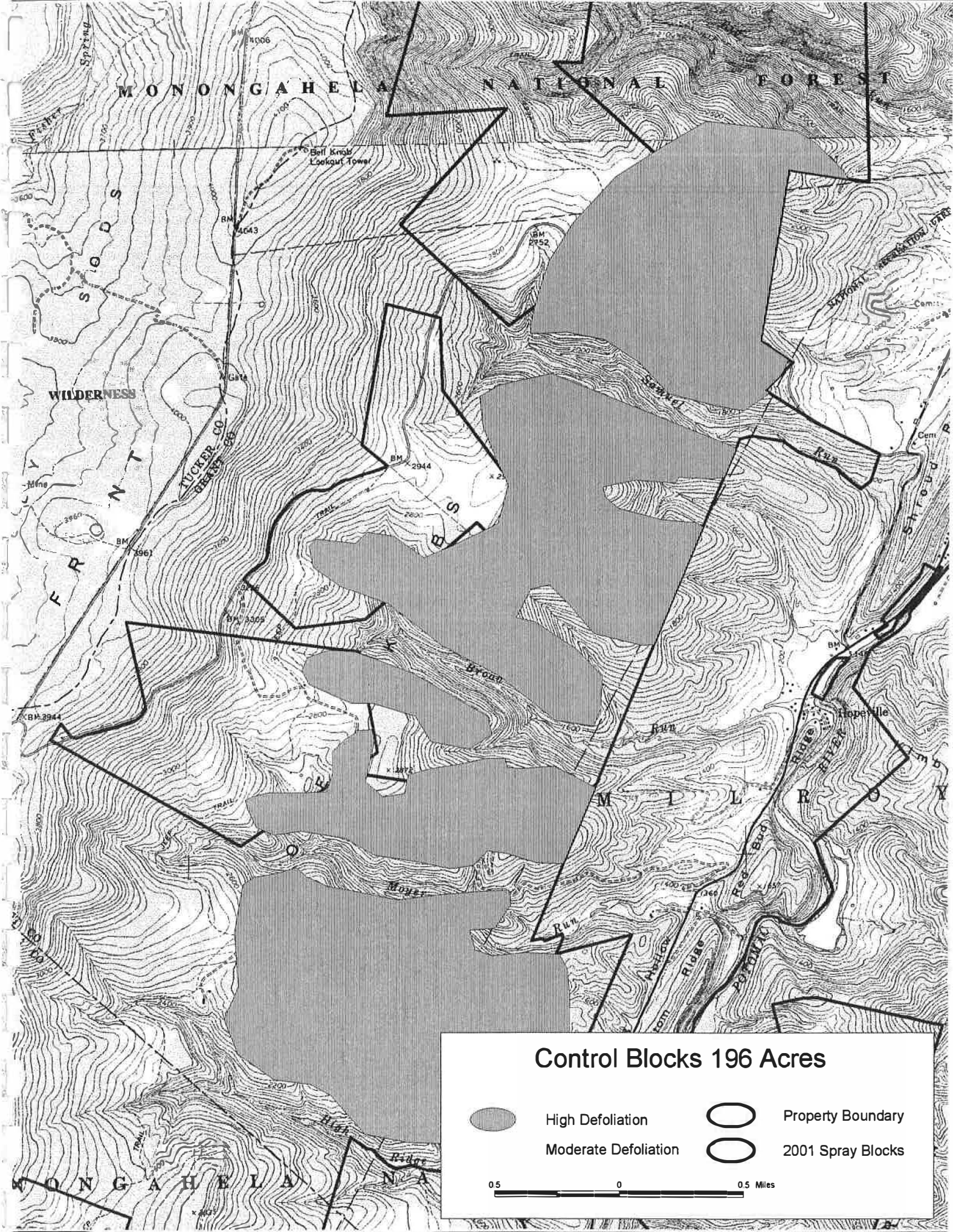
*10 days with no weather delays in treatment, may want to use a more conservative figure (e.g. 7 days)

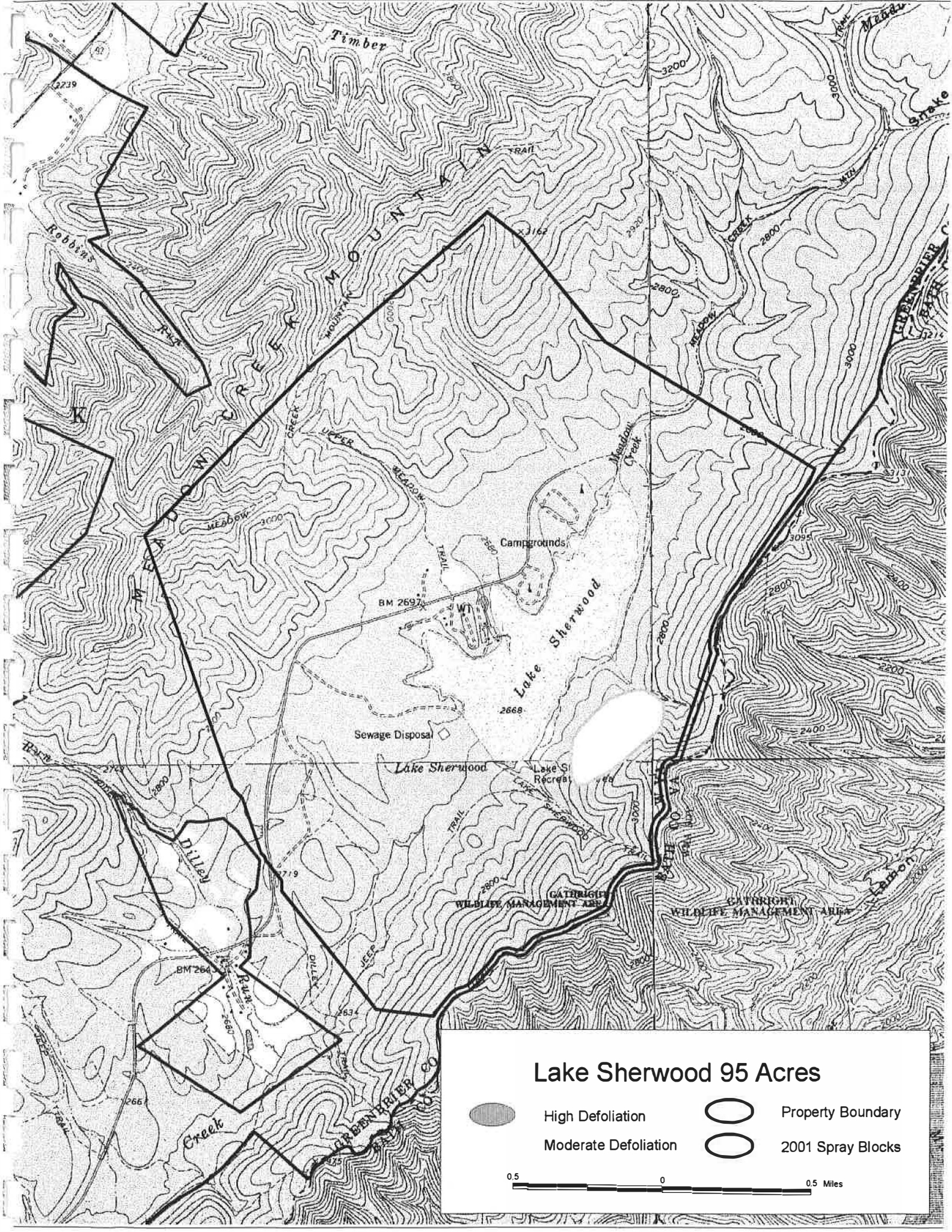
During the project, 900 acres/hour was never achieved.

5. If Foray products are used in future projects, field bioassay kits can be obtained by the company. These field kits can be used to test if adequate *Btk* deposit remains on the foliage after rain events or when spray deposit gaps are suspected based on GPS flight files. Language could be incorporated into the contract to require bioassay kits. Also, language could be incorporated in the contract and Environmental Assessment that would allow for re-treatment if results from the bioassay kits show inadequate deposit after treatment or after a rain event.

APPENDIX A

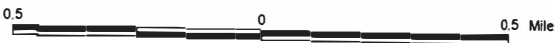
DEFOLIATION MAPS

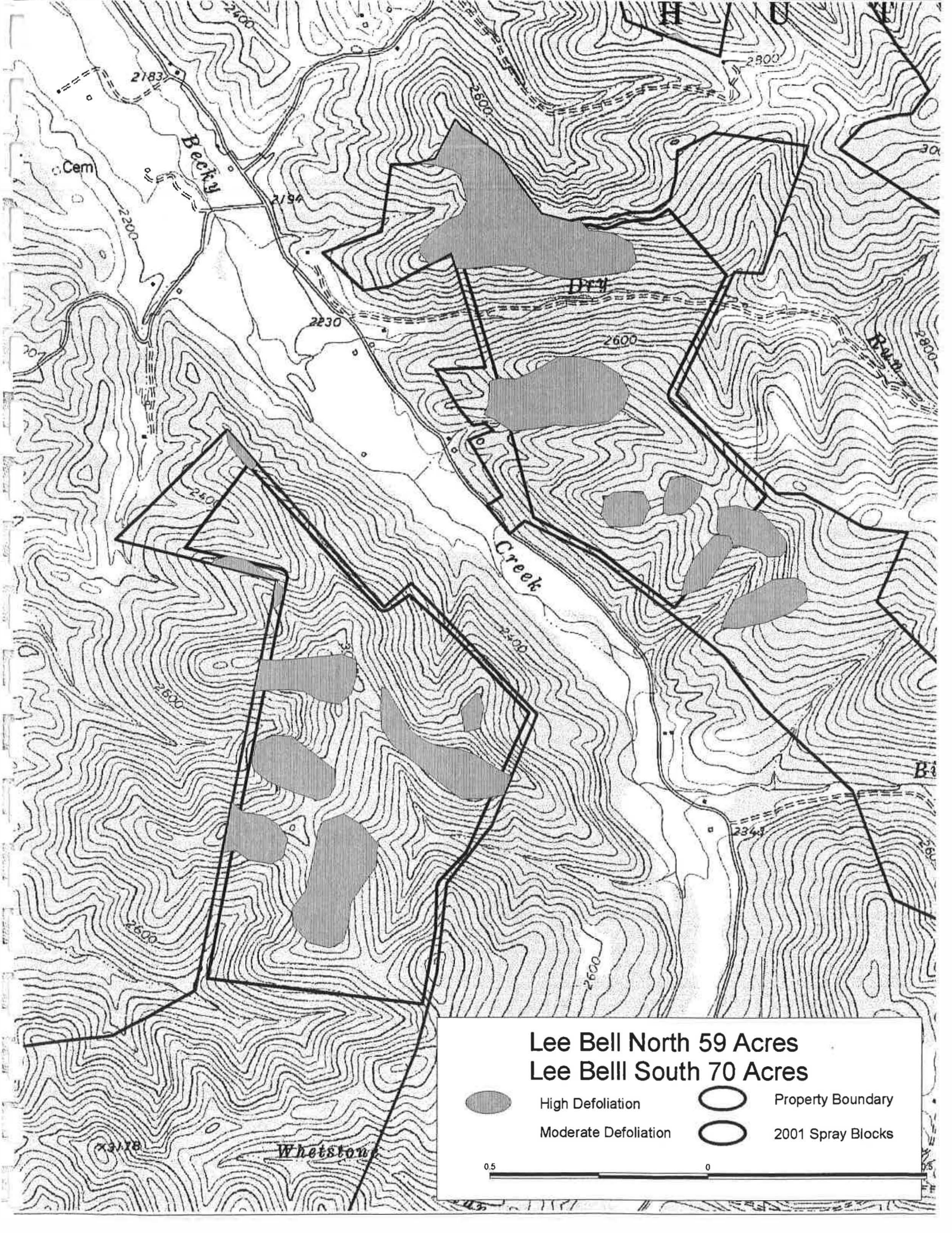




Lake Sherwood 95 Acres

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
|  | High Defoliation |  | Property Boundary |
|  | Moderate Defoliation |  | 2001 Spray Blocks |

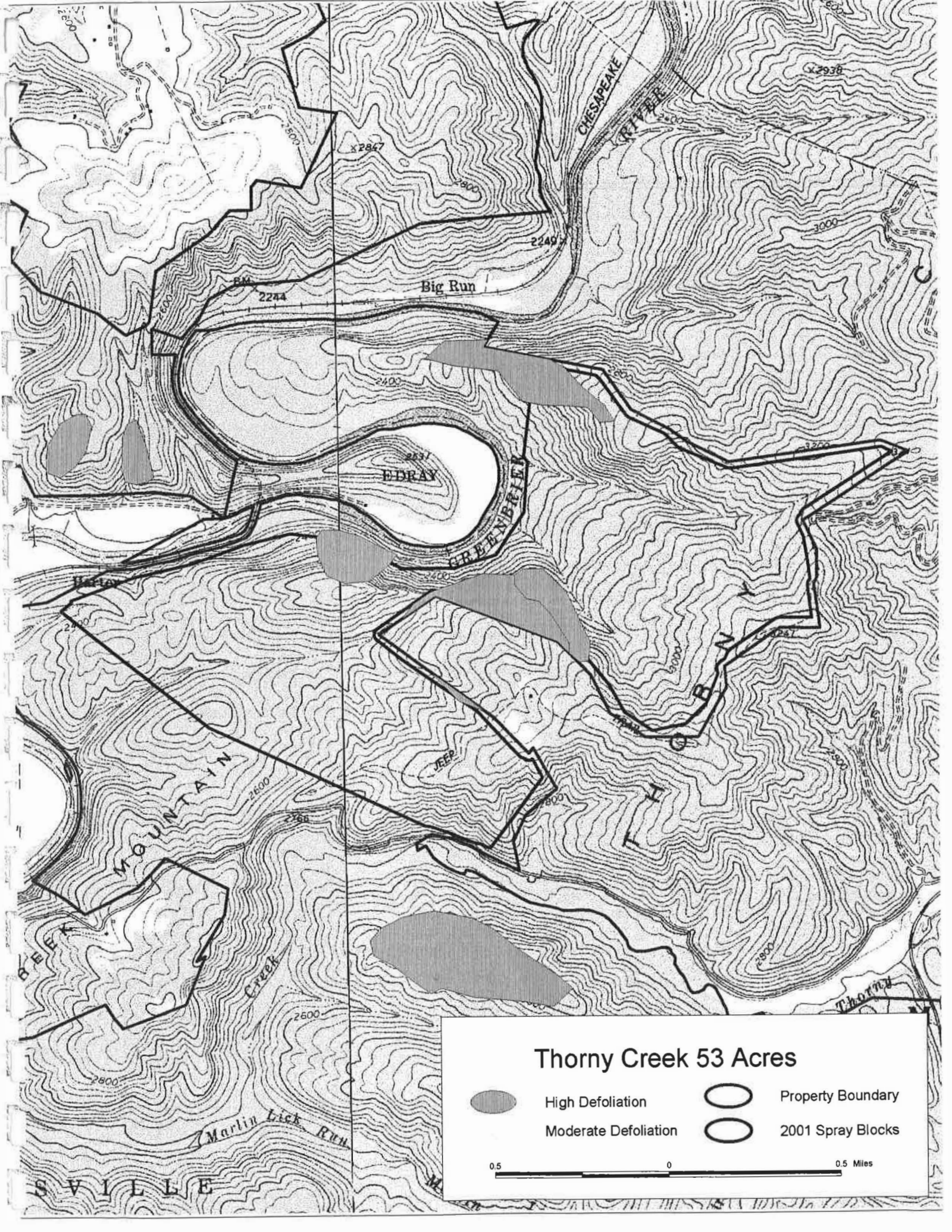




Lee Bell North 59 Acres
Lee Bell South 70 Acres

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
|  | High Defoliation |  | Property Boundary |
|  | Moderate Defoliation |  | 2001 Spray Blocks |





Thorny Creek 53 Acres



High Defoliation



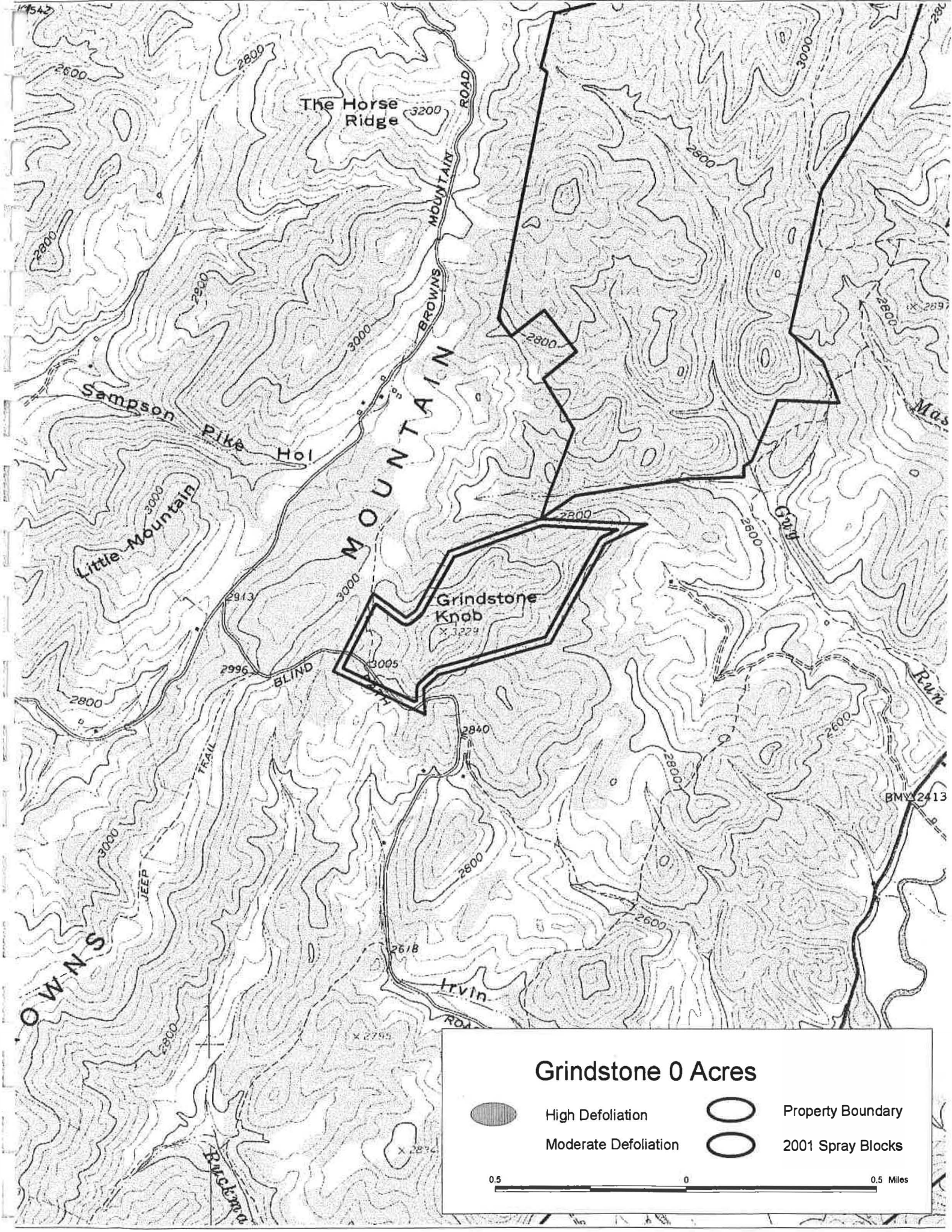
Property Boundary

Moderate Defoliation



2001 Spray Blocks

0.5 0 0.5 Miles



The Horse Ridge

BROWNS MOUNTAIN ROAD

Sampson Pike

Little Mountain

MOUNTAIN

Grindstone Knob
X 3229

BLIND

JEEP TRAIL

Irvin Road

BMV 2413

Grindstone 0 Acres



High Defoliation

Moderate Defoliation

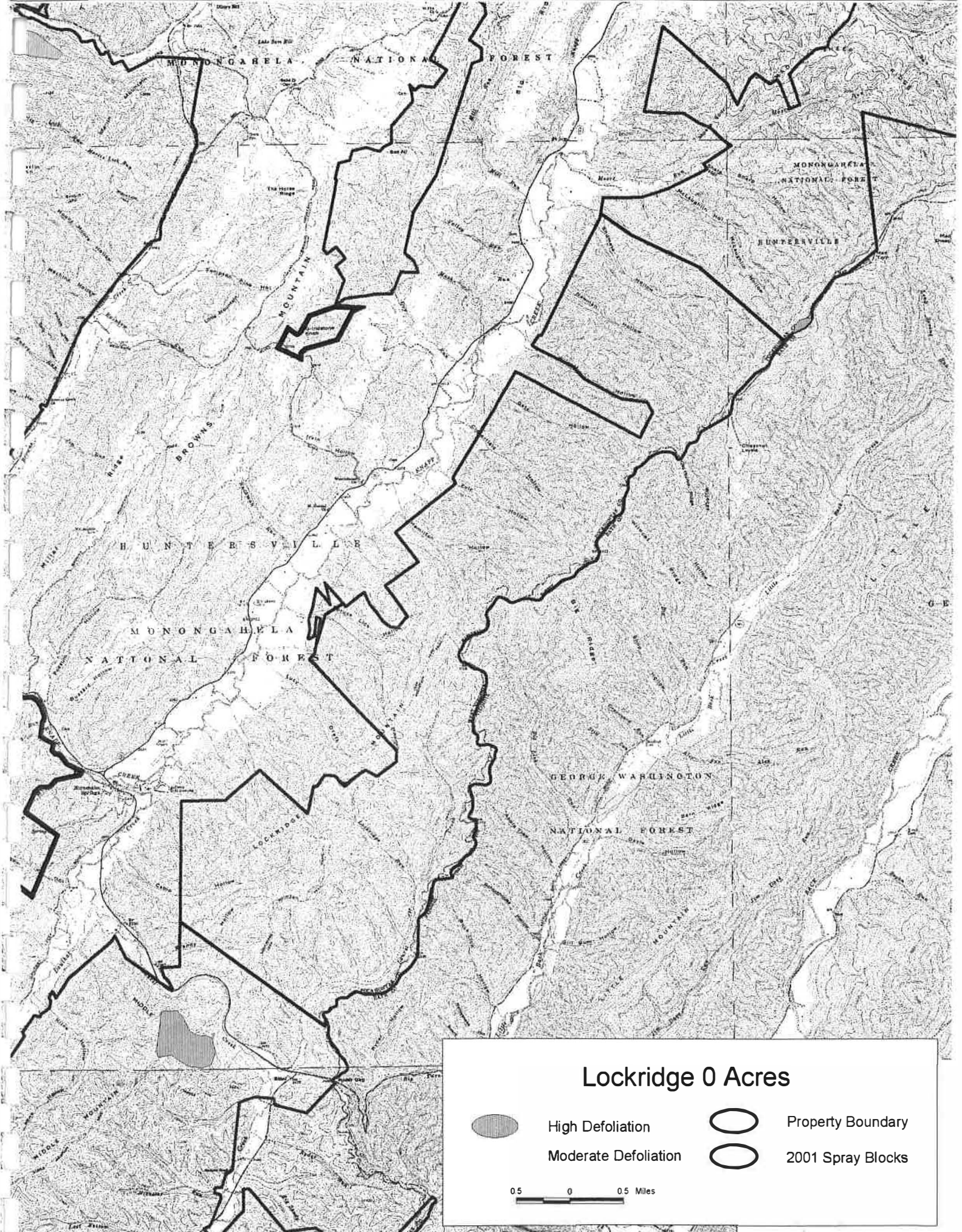


Property Boundary



2001 Spray Blocks

0.5 0 0.5 Miles



Lockridge 0 Acres

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
|  | High Defoliation |  | Property Boundary |
|  | Moderate Defoliation |  | 2001 Spray Blocks |

0.5 0 0.5 Miles

APPENDIX B

CONDITIONS AT THE TIME OF TREATMENT

Lee Bell North Block (1 application only)

Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage
5/10/01	10:24	4-7	71-73	36-31	Dry	N/A	20-30	Good
5/14/01	10:54	4-7	60	26	Dry	2nd	60	Good
5/14/01	13:12	13-18	70	31	Dry	2 nd	60	Good

Lee Bell South Block (1 application only)

Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage
NO INFORMATION RECORDED FOR LEE BELL SOUTH BLOCK, BUT WAS TREATED AT THE SAME TIME AS LEE BELL NORTH BLOCK.								

Thorny Creek Block (1st application)

Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage
5/11/01	05:55	1-3	48	74	Dry	2 nd	40-50	Good
5/14/01	10:54	4-7	60	26	Dry	2 nd	60	Good
5/14/01	13:12	13-18	70	31	Dry	2 nd	60	Good

Thorny Creek Block (2nd application)

Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage
5/14/01	18:32	4-7	68	32	Dry	2 nd	60	Good

Grindstone Block (1st application)

Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage
5/10/01	07:38	Calm	48	94	Damp	2 nd	25	Good

Grindstone Block (2nd application)

Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage
5/14/01	08:42	0-0.5	36	69	Dry	1-2 nd	50	Good

Brushy Mtn. (1st application)

Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage
5/10/01	07:38	Calm	48	94	Damp	2 nd	25	Gaps
5/11/01	08:33	0-0.5	68	50	Dry	2 nd	40	Gaps
5/11/01	10:09	4-7	72	56	Dry	2 nd	40	Gaps
5/12/01	07:46	1-3	53	86	N/A	2 nd	40	Gaps

Brushy Mtn. (2nd application)

Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage
5/19/01	12:53	4-7	67	86	Damp	2-3 rd	80	Good
5/19/01	16:55	2-4	73	62	Dry	2-3 rd	80	Good
5/20/01	13:13	1-3	63	90	Dry	2 nd	80	Good
5/20/01	14:39	Calm	67	80	Dry	2 nd	80	Good

Lake Sherwood (1st application)

Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage
5/07/01	06:14	4-7	45	92	Dry	2 nd	25	Good
5/07/01	07:41	1-3	44	90	Dry	2 nd	25	Good
5/10/01	07:38	Calm	48	94	Damp	2 nd	25	Good

Lake Sherwood (2nd application)

Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage*
5/11/01	18:42	1-3	74	33	Dry	2 nd	30-50	?????
5/12/01	05:56	Calm	53	88	Dry	N/A	30-50	?????

*Glitches in the GPS system. Small tags at the beginning and ending of lines show that the boom was turned on and off.

Lockridge (1st application)

Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage
5/7/01	09:54	Calm	54	59	Dry	1 st	25%	Good
5/7/01	11:26	4-7	63	39	Dry	1 st	25%	Good
5/8/01	06:12	1-3	42	76	Dry	1-2 nd	25-30	Good
5/8/01	08:10	1-3	52	74	Dry	1-2 nd	25-30	Good
5/8/01	09:35	1-3	58	67	Dry	1-2 nd	25-30	Good
5/9/01	09:02	1-3	60	68	Dry	1-2 nd	25-30	Good
5/9/01	10:29	4-7	70	40	Dry	1-2 nd	25-30	Good
5/10/01	06:03	0-0.5	50	98	Dry	1-2 nd	25-30	Good

Lockridge (2nd application)

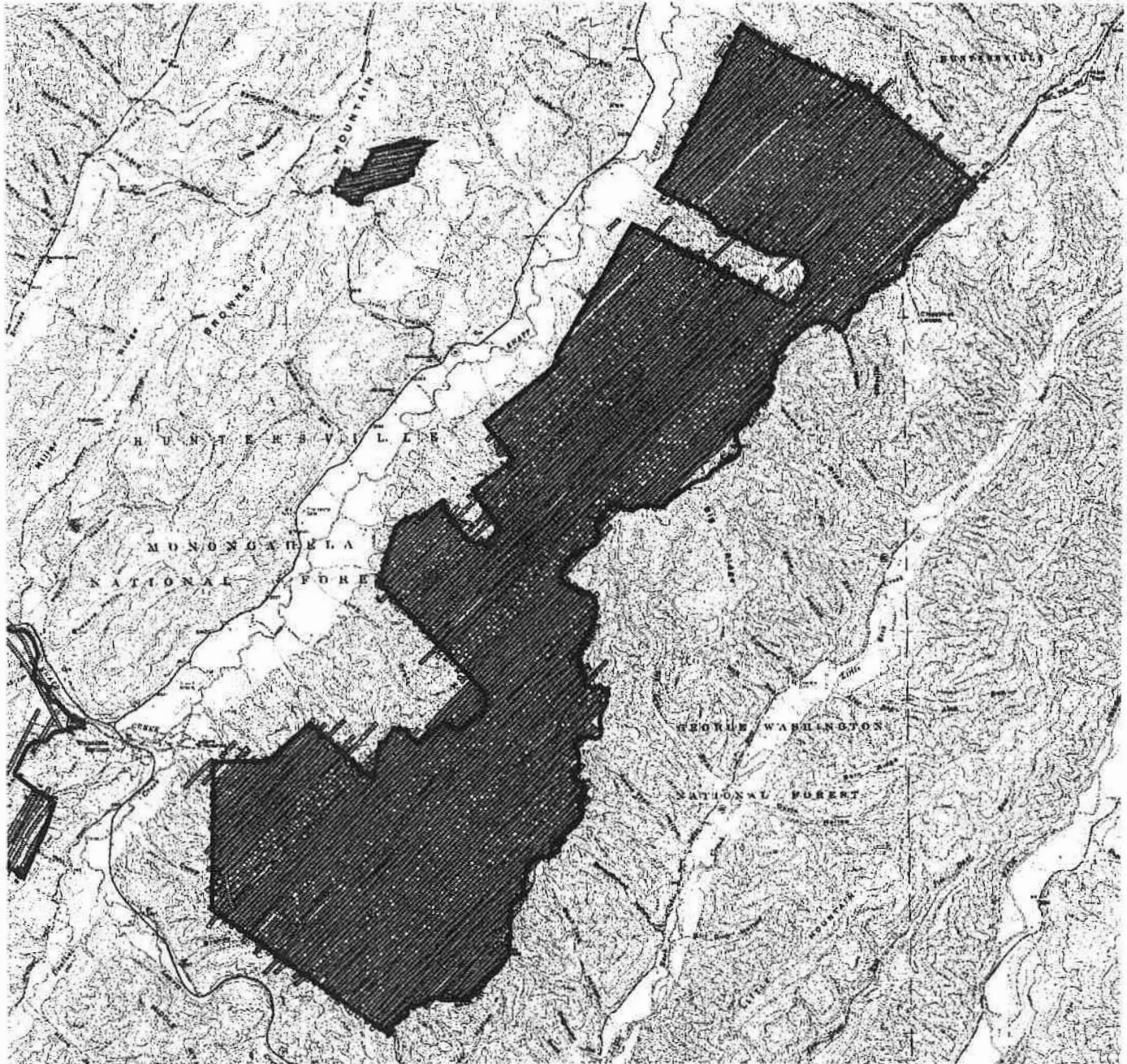
Date	Time	Wind Speed	Temp	R/H	Foliage Cond.	Instar	Foliage Exp. (%)	GPS Coverage
5/12/01	07:46	0-0.5	69	47	Dry	N/A	40%	Gaps
5/13/01	05:44	1-3	44	80	Dry	2 nd	40-50	Gaps
5/13/01	07:41	1-3	44	68	Dry	2 nd	40-50	Gaps
5/13/01	09:07	1-3	48	59	Dry	2 nd	40-50	Gaps
5/13/01	10:34	1-3	64	42	Dry	2 nd	40-50	Gaps
5/13/01	18:40	No Data Collected for the evening spray						
5/14/01	06:39	1-3	43	84	Dry	2 nd	40-70	Gaps
5/14/01	08:42	1-3	56	55	Dry	2 nd	40-70	Gaps

APPENDIX C

GPS FLIGHT FILES

Monogahela National Forest 2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project

Lockridge (MNF06)
double application of Foray 76B
@42.7 oz. per acre
first application



1 0 1 2 Miles

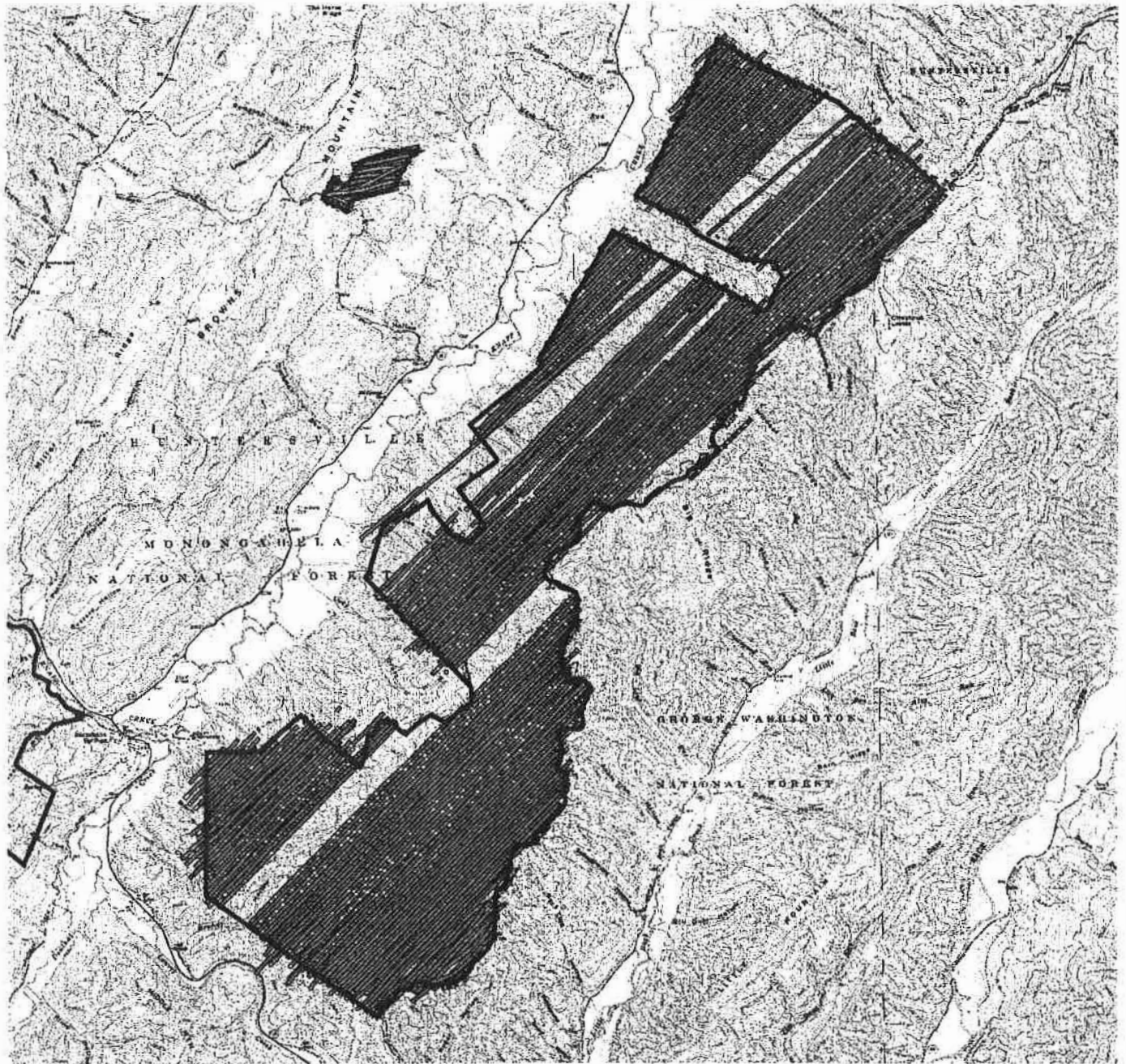


Legend

- Treatment block
- Area treated, flight path

Monogahela National Forest 2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project

Lockridge (MNF06)
double application of Foray 76B
@42.7 oz per acre
second application



1 0 1 2 Miles

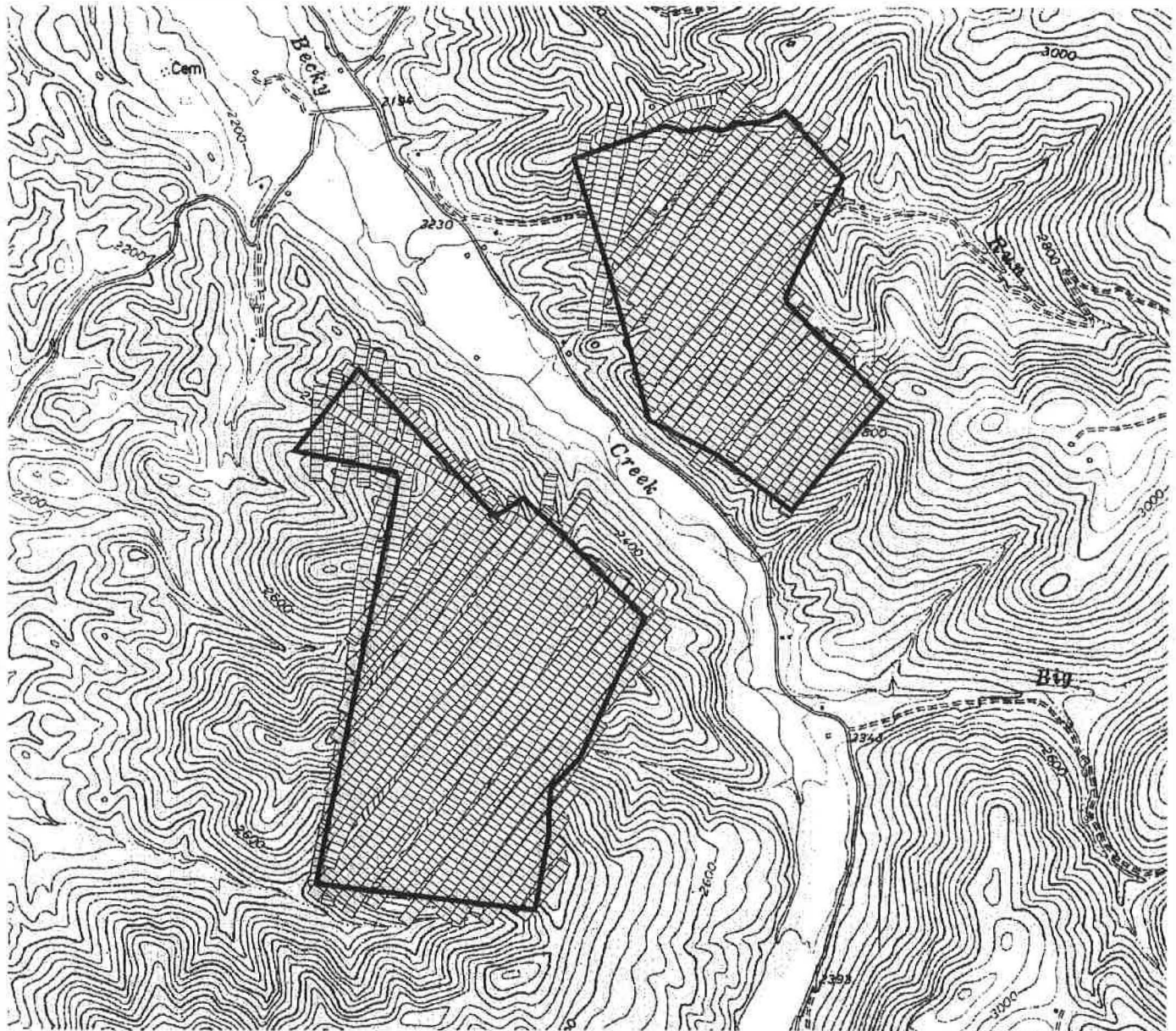


Legend

- Treatment block
- Area treated, flight path

Monogahela National Forest 2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project

Lee Bell North (MNF01)
Lee Bell South (MNF02)
single application of Thuricide 76LV
@42.7 oz. per acre



0.2 0 0.2 0.4 Miles

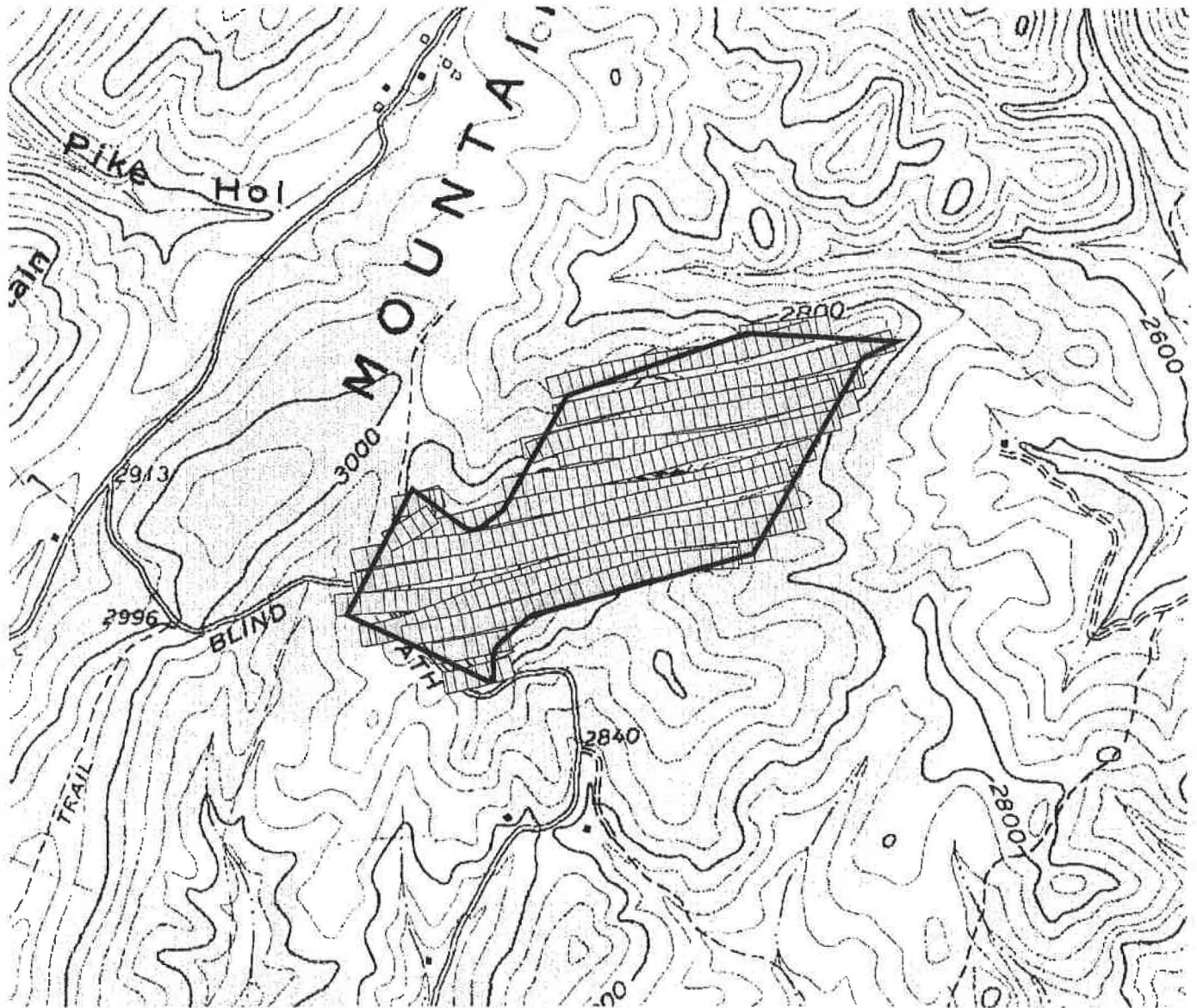


Legend

-  Treatment block
-  Area treated, flight path

Monogahela National Forest 2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project

Grindstone (MNF04)
double application of Foray 76B
@42.7 oz per acre
first application



0.1 0 0.1 0.2 Miles

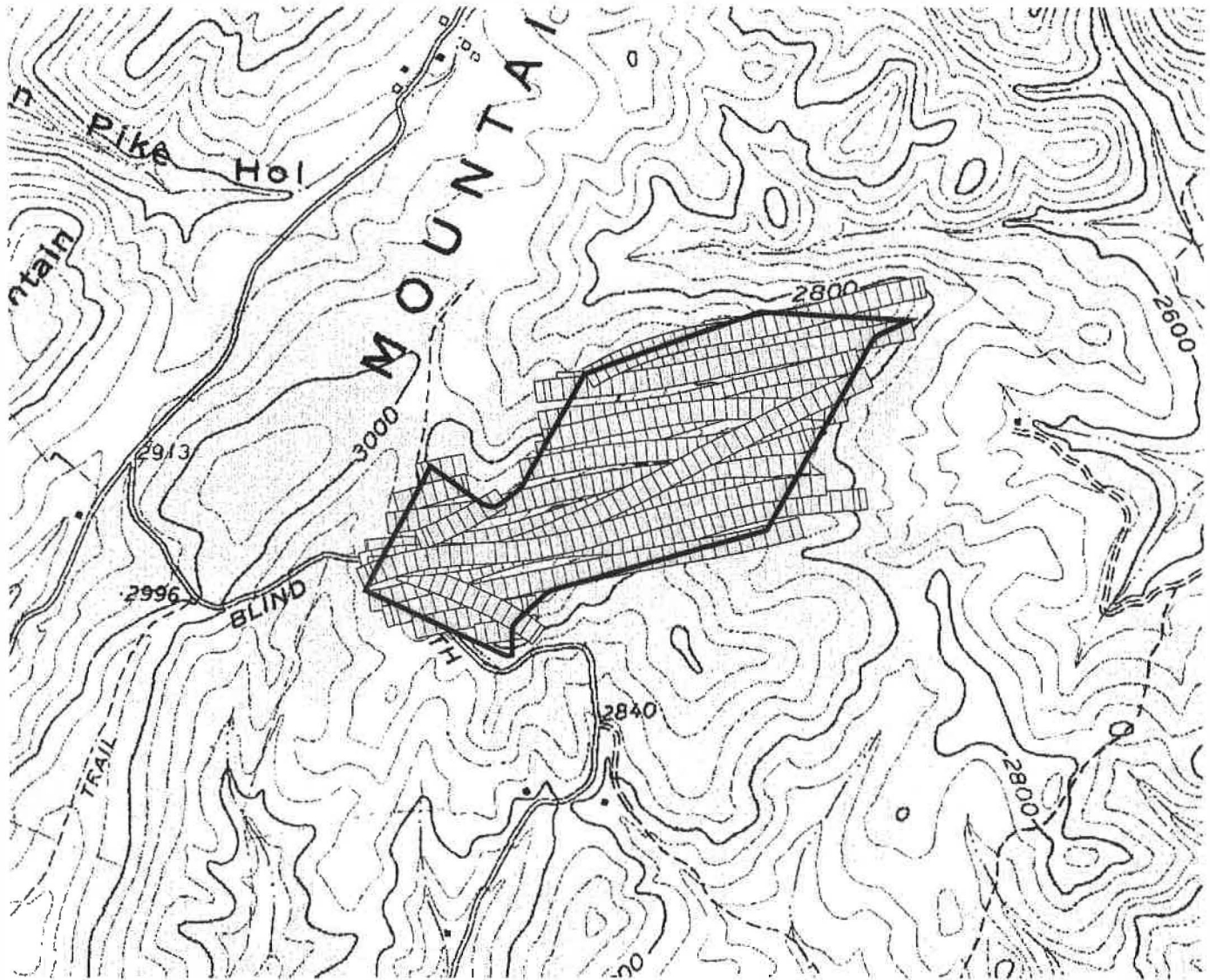


Legend

-  Treatment block
-  Area treated, flight path

Monogahela National Forest 2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project

Grindstone (MNF04)
double application of Foray 76B
@42.7 oz per acre
second application



0.1 0 0.1 0.2 Miles

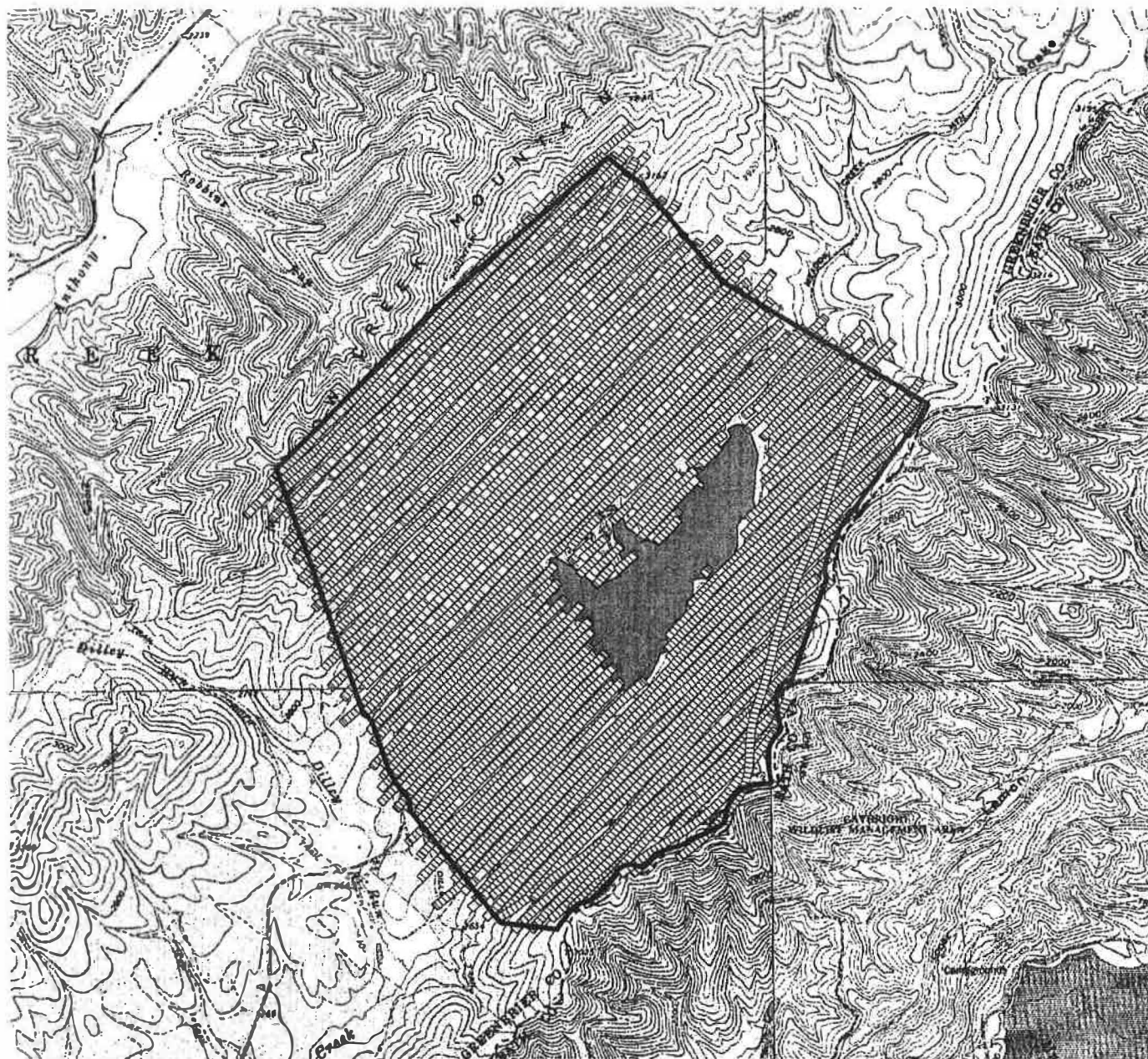


Legend

-  Treatment block
-  Area treated, flight path

Monogahela National Forest 2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project

Lake Sherwood (MNF07)
double application of Foray 76B
@42.7 oz. per acre
first application



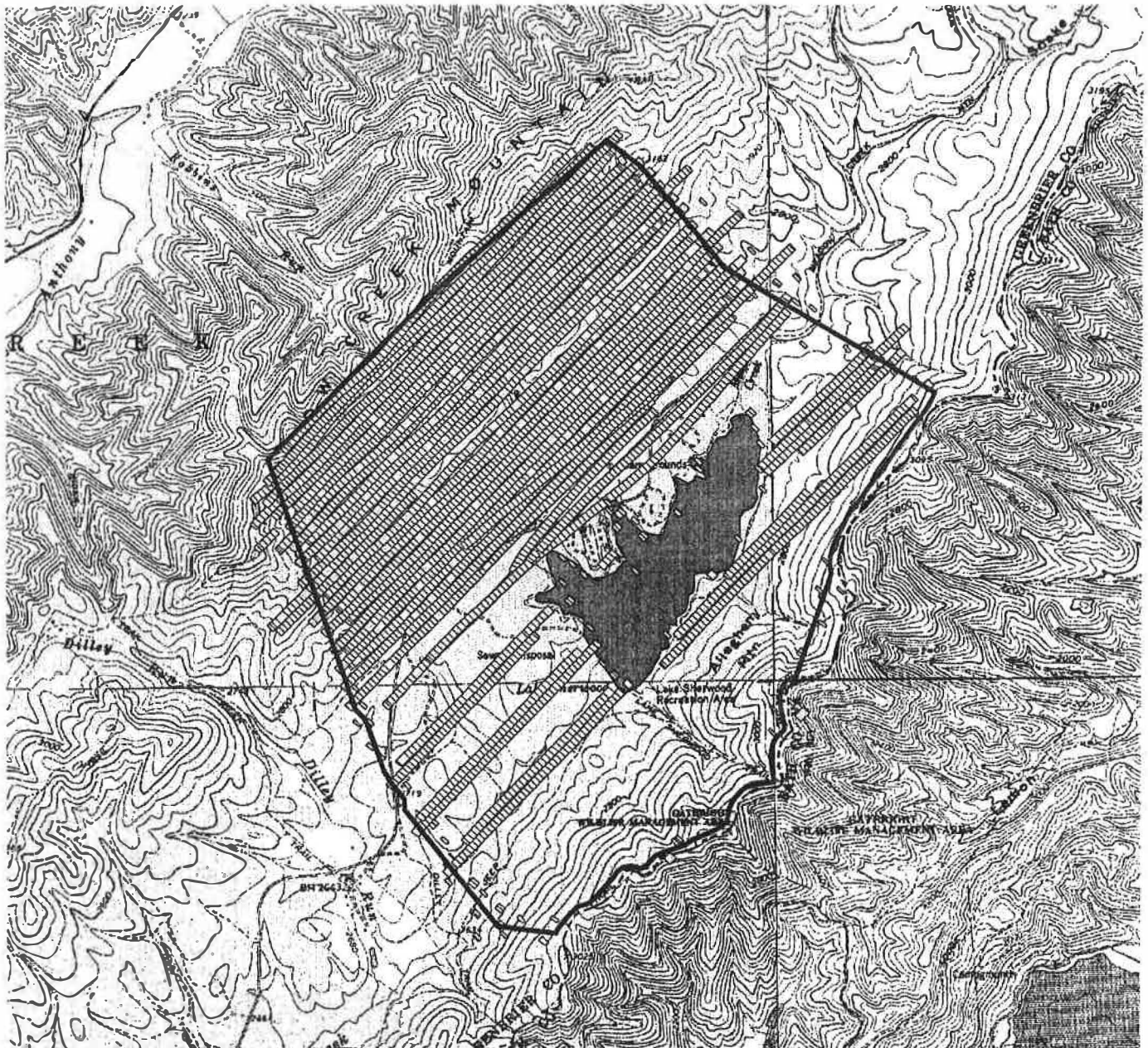
Legend



Treatment block
Area treated, flight path

Monogahela National Forest 2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project

Lake Sherwood (MNF07)
double application of Foray 76B
@42.7 oz. per acre
second application



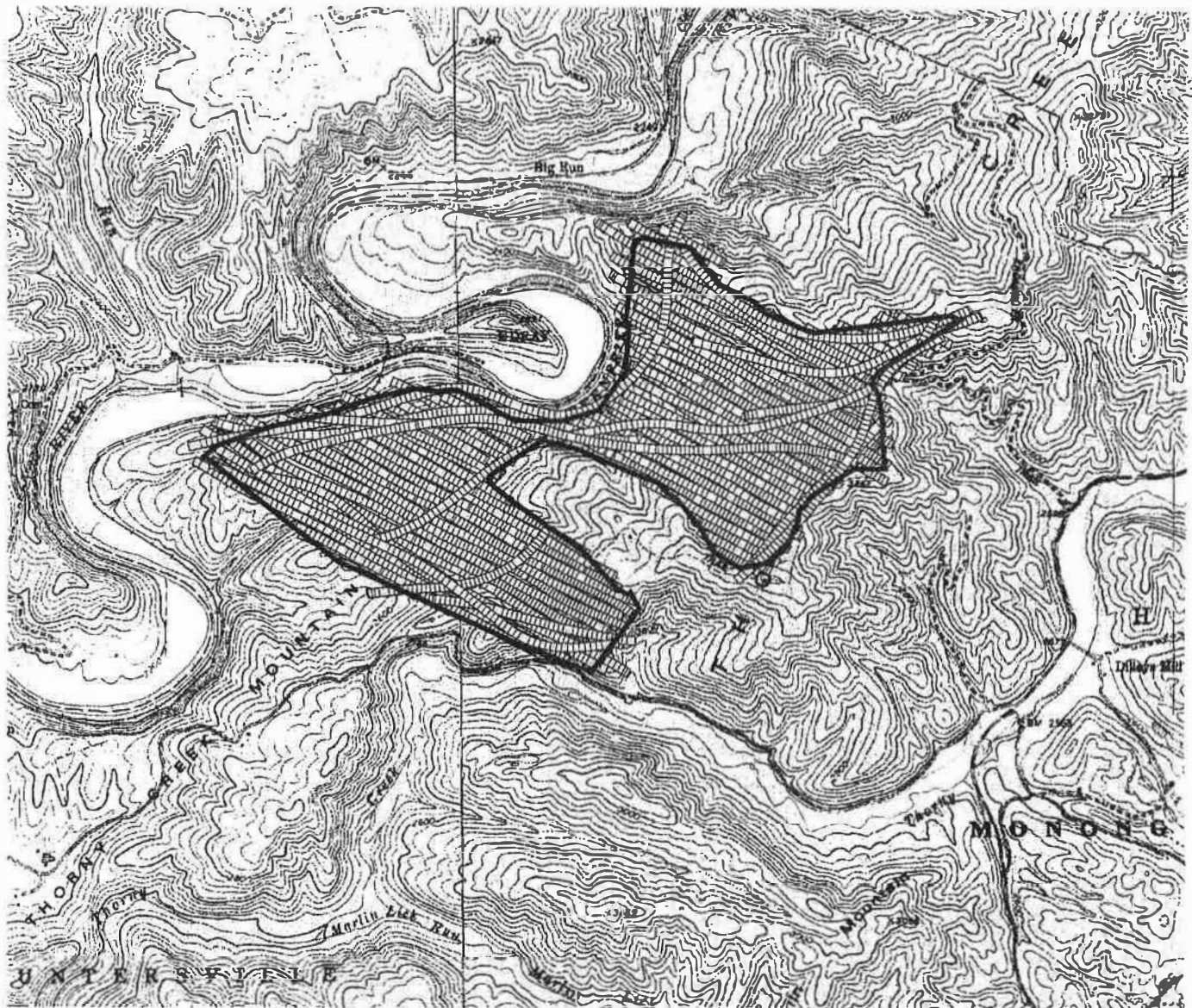
Legend



Treatment block
Area treated, flight path

Monogahela National Forest 2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project

Thomy Creek (MNF03)
double application of Thuricide 76LV
@42.7 oz. per acre
first application



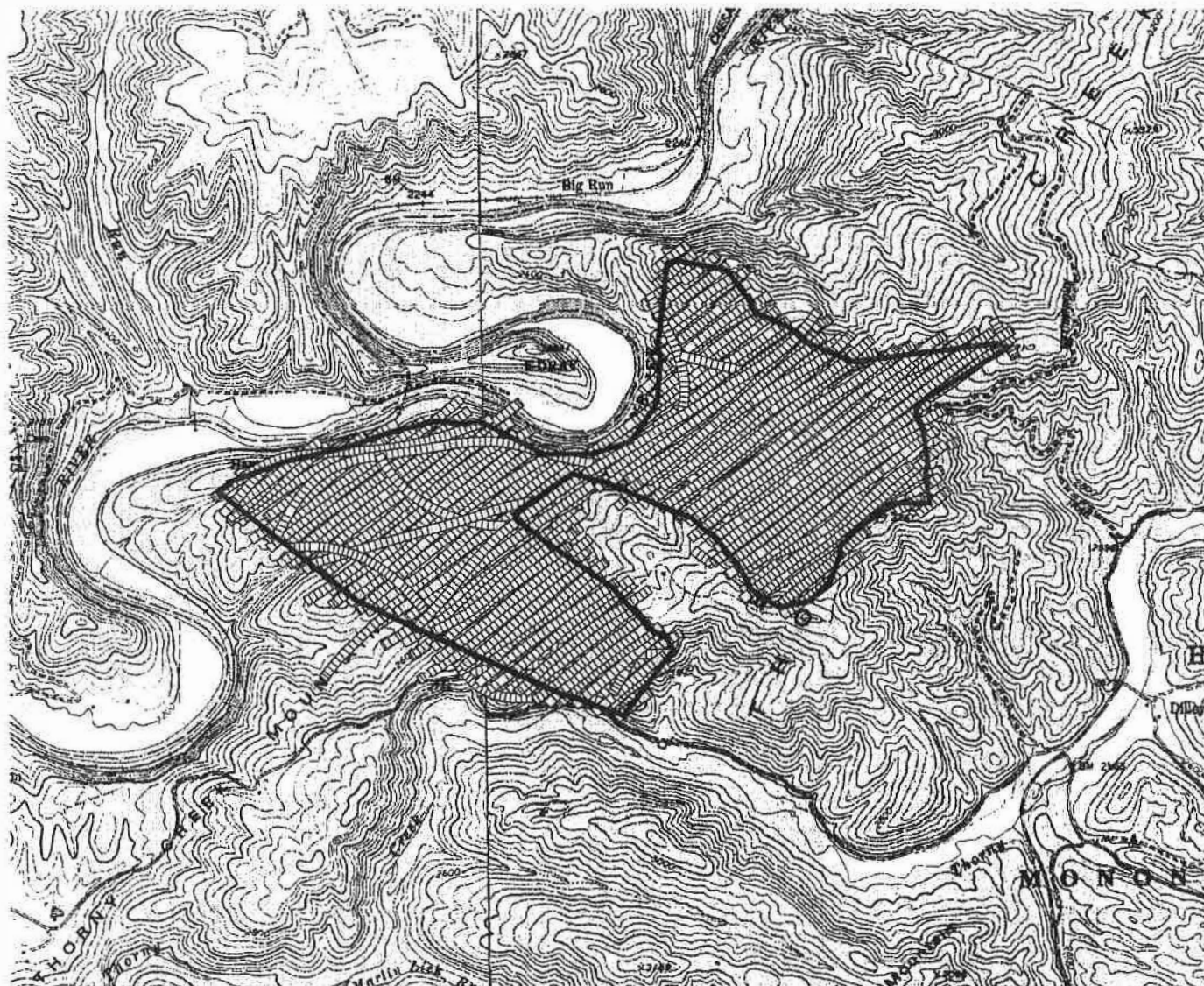
0.2 0 0.2 0.4 Miles



Treatment block
Area treated, flight path

Monogahela National Forest 2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project

Thorny Creek (MNF03)
double application of Thuricide 76LV
@42.7 oz. per acre
second application



0.3 0 0.3 0.6 Miles

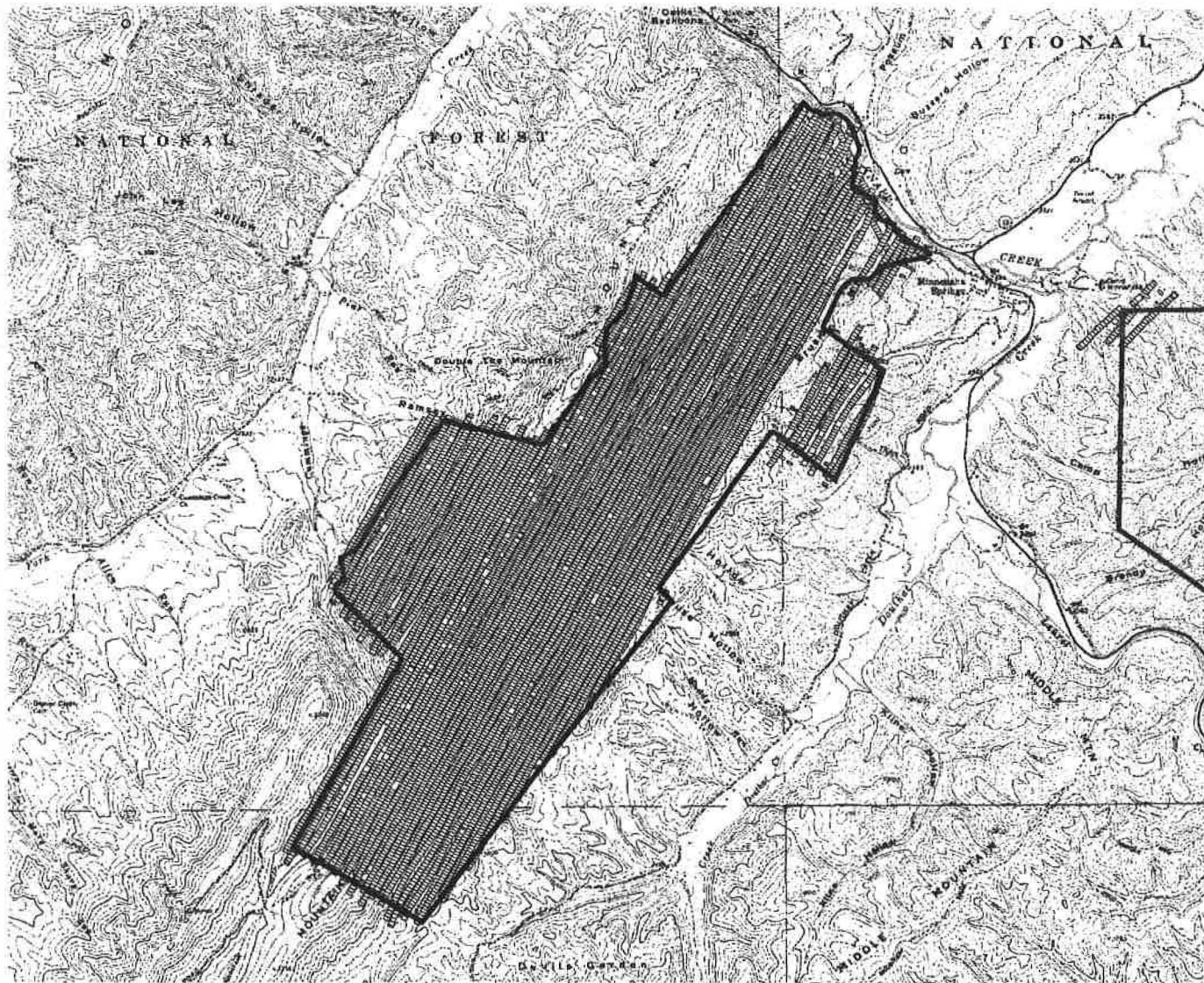


Legend

-  Treatment block
-  Area treated, flight path

Monogahela National Forest 2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project

Brushy (MNF05)
double application of Foray 76B
@42.7 oz. per acre
first application



0.5 0 0.5 1 Miles

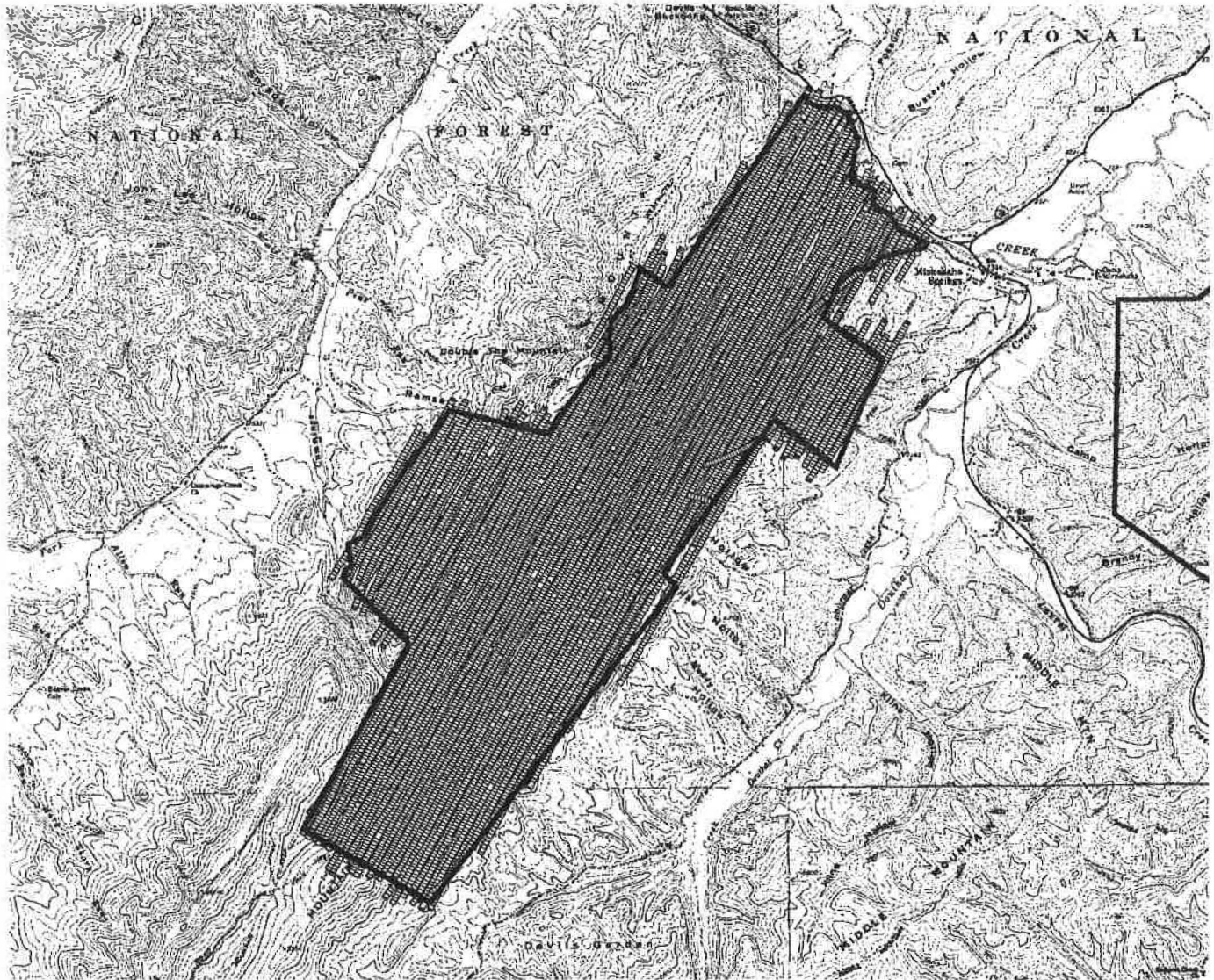


Legend

-  Treatment block
-  Area treated, flight path

Monogahela National Forest 2001 Gypsy Moth Suppression Project

Brushy (MNF05)
double application of Foray 76B
@42.7 oz. per acre
second application



0.4 0 0.4 0.8 Miles



Legend

-  Treatment block
-  Area treated, flight path